

EAST GREENWICH SCHOOL COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MAY 16, 2006 SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

1. Call to Order

The East Greenwich School Committee met on Tuesday, May 16, 2006 in the East Greenwich High School Auditorium. The meeting was called to order by Chair Vincent Bradley at 7:00 p.m. Other members present were: Paul Martin, Dr. Ross, Steve Gregson, William Day, Sue Cienki, and Merrill Friedemann as well as Assistant Superintendent Helen O'Hara, Maryanne Crawford, and Robert Wilmarth, Director of Facilities.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

3. State of District

a. Superintendent's Update

Mr. Meyers reported that the high school prom was very successful and he is proud of the students, faculty, administrators and parents. He also thanked the Central Office Administration and School Committee for their diligence in getting the budget approved.

Mr. Meyers stated that Mr. Will Yoder's studio students from RISD will display their work at Cole on May 30.

b. Reports – There were no reports.

4. Public Comments for Items not on the Agenda-There were no public comments.

5. Approval of Minutes – There were no minutes to approve.

6. Recognitions

6.1 High School Valedictorian -William Wray, and Salutatorian-Monica Rosenberg were recognized by the Committee with a certificate.

6.2 The following Cole students were recognized for winning a “SUPERIOR” rating at the R.I. Music Educator’s Association Choral Festival: Kylah Abbott, Sarah Bolton, Natasha Cormier, Megan Ellery, Shiandra Fantasia, Jordan Fowler, Meghan Gallogly, Jade Genga, Maia Hunt, Helena Johnston, Mackensie Rickert, Olivia Sangster, Kate Schnell, and Melissa Hordes. Jan Breidenbach is the director.

7. New Business

7.1 Parental Leave

On a motion made by Mr. Martin and seconded by Dr. Ross, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the following parental leaves:

7.1.1 Denise Champney, Speech Language Pathologist, for the 2006-2007 school year.

7.1.2 Caroline Stabile, Science Teacher at Cole, for the 06-07 school year.

7.2 Teacher Recall

On a motion made by Mr. Martin and seconded by Dr. Ross, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the following teacher recalls:

7.2.3 Michelle Rinn, grade 2 at Frenchtown School

7.2.4 Aaron Richard, kindergarten at Frenchtown School

7.3 Appointments

On a motion made by Mr. Martin and seconded by Dr. Ross, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the following appointment:

7.2.5 Robert Kurtz, night Head Custodian at East Greenwich High School,

effective 4-8-06

7.4 Resignation

On a motion made by Mr. Martin and seconded by Mrs. Cienki, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the following resignations:

7.2.6 Gloria Monte, grade 4 at Eldredge School, effective May 26, 2006

7.2.7 Noelle Minardi Durkin, grade 6 at Hanaford, effective June 20, 2006

7.2.8 Lynne Weremay, paraprofessional at Eldredge, effective May 2, 2006

8. Report on New England Common Assessment Program results

Mrs. O'Hara gave a lengthy presentation on the NECAP Common Assessment Program. Mr. Meyers explained that this is one measure of proficiency as well as assessments. Dr. Ross is concerned that students lose one week of the school year testing. Mrs. O'Hara feels this is the first useful data for classroom teachers. Mr. Bradley asked how parents are linked into this. Mrs. O'Hara responded that the

testing results are sent home and the schools also have report nights.

9. Student Handbook revisions for school year 2006-2007

Mr. Levine and Mrs. Cullen presented the revisions which include a Dress Code, Use of Electronic Devices, Drug and Alcohol Policy, Athletic Handbook Revisions, Senior Bunk Day, Harassment Policy and a World of Difference Pledge. Mr. Martin asked if our legal counsel has seen these revisions. Dr. Ross feels that the pledge should be revised and aligned with our Character Counts Policy. There was a consensus that these revisions would be looked at again on June 20th.

10. Cheerleading as a Varsity Sport-There was no vote on this item

11. Tuition Rate Increase for 2006

Mrs. Cienki made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Martin to approve a 6% tuition increase for the 2006-2007 school year. Dr. Ross feels that the rates should be decreased to attract more students. Mr. Martin asked about Barrington's costs and if they use their per pupil cost. Mrs. Friedemann asked if we have the right to charge tuition. There was also a discussion about charging the per pupil cost. Dr. Ross made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Martin to table this item to a later meeting. The motion to table passed with Mr. Gregson and Mr. Day voting no.

12. Resolutions for Personnel and Finance Advisory Committees

It was noted that the formation of a Finance Advisory Committee was approved in January 2005. Mrs. Friedemann stated that the Town Council has put out a RFP for a Human Resources person, and she

feels that we need to make a dedication to smaller government. Mrs. Crawford stated that this committee gives citizens the opportunity to advise the School Committee. Mr. Gregson feels that it needs more discussion. Mrs. Friedemann wants the School Committee to delineate what this advisory committee will do. She also asked why we don't use the people we already pay to do the job. Dr. Ross feels that these types of positions are needed to make the School Committee work better. Dr. Ross made a motion to get a charge for this advisory committee and put it on the agenda for the second meeting in June. This was seconded by Mr. Day.

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Dr. Ross feels we should move slower with the Personnel Advisory Committee. Mrs. Friedemann would like this document to be sent to Mr. Ackerman. Dr. Ross made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Day to table this until an unspecified date in the future after the Finance Advisory Committee is formed. The motion passed unanimously.

13. Resolution on Special Education Laws

Mr. Martin made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Day to approve the special education resolution suggested by Jamestown. Mr. Meyers stated that the intent from Jamestown was to bring State Law in line with federal legislation. He also noted that it sends a message that the RI regulations for special education exceed federal requirements and create an additional expense because the legislature doesn't fund them. The School Committee voted unanimously not to pass the resolution.

14. Out-of-state field trip to New Hampshire from August 14 through 18 for the boys' cross country team. Mr. Day made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Cienki to approve this trip. The motion passed unanimously.

15. Out-of-state field trip to North Carolina from June 27-to 30 for the high school girls' basketball team. Mr. Day made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Cienki to approve this trip. The motion passed unanimously.

16. School Committee Concerns

Mrs. Cienki mentioned the May 18 and May 30 Jazz Band presentations. She also asked if a speaker could be scheduled to explain the difference between the Character Counts Policy and the Second Step Policy.

Mr. Martin invited School Committee members to the SORICO meeting on May 25.

Mr. Gregson feels that all members should have access to the same information when one member of the Committee asks for a lawyer's opinion. He also mentioned the previous evening's Town Council meeting and feels that this Committee has set up future Committees, asking what is to stop future Town Council members from taking funds that should have been in the school budget. Mrs. Friedemann feels it is not a problem with the Committee but a problem with the budgeting process as the Town Council thinks there are frivolous things being done with the money. She also asked why individual School Committee members and staff people are calling our lawyers.

Mr. Martin does not feel that the Providence Journal is biased.

17. Public Comments for Items on the Agenda-There were no public comments.

Mr. Robert Vespia stated that he would like copies of documents that are discussed at meetings to be available for the public.

18. On a motion made by Mrs. Cienki and seconded by Mr. Day, the Committee, being polled individually, voted to go into Executive Session at 9:40p.m.under RIGL 42-46-5 (a) (1) (2), Personnel, Special Education Litigation, Athletic Field Leasing Proposal, Grievance on Outsourcing Maintenance Functions, Discussion of teacher contract negotiations and contract signing, Eldredge School Principal, and Documents relating to teacher contract. Dr. Ross voted no.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia Giuliani

Secretary